

Message Text

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ACTION DLOS-04

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-09 NEA-10 IO-11 ISO-00 FEA-01

ACDA-10 AGR-10 AID-05 CEA-01 CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00

CIEP-02 OFA-01 COME-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-07 EPA-04

ERDA-07 FMC-02 TRSE-00 H-02 INR-07 INT-05 JUSE-00

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 NSF-02 OES-05 OMB-01 PA-02 PM-04

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 SAL-01 AF-06 ARA-10 /184 W

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R 180140Z MAR 76

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6374

INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USLO PEKING

UNCLAS USUN 1060

E.O.#11652: N/A

TAGS: PLOS, UN

SUBJ: LOS CONFERENCE: OPENING MEETING, MARCH 15

1. UN SYG WALDHEIM, LOS CONFERENCE PRESIDENT AMERASINGHE (SRI LANKA) AND HEADS OF VARIOUS DELEGATIONS ADDRESSED OPENING MEETING OF FOURTH SESSION OF LOS CONFERENCE MARCH 15. IN ADDITION IT WAS FORMALLY ANNOUNCED THAT AGUILAR (VENEZUELA) HAD BEEN ELECTED TO REPLACE GALINDO POHL (EL SALVADOR) AS CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEE II.

2. IN HIS STATEMENT TO LOS CONFERENCE, SYG SAID HE FELT THIS SESSION WOULD PROVE TO BE DECISIVE PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF DECISION TO PREPARE SINGLE NEGOTIATING TEXT, AN ACT WHICH REFLECTED REAL COMMITMENT TO PROCEED TOWARDS GENERAL AGREEMENT AND COMPREHENSIVE CONVENTION. IN SYG'S VIEW, GENERAL AGREEMENT NEAR ON ISSUES OF LIMITS OF TERRITORIAL SEA AND ECONOMIC ZONE, BUT PROBLEMS STILL UNCLASSIFIED

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REMAIN ON PASSAGE THROUGH STRAITS, PROBLEMS OF LANDLOCKED STATES,

AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, ESTABLISHMENT OF SEA-BED AUTHORITY. HE EMPHASIZED NEED TO ENSURE UTILIZATION AND PROTECTION OF FISH STOCKS AND TO RESOLVE PROBLEM OF CONDUCT OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH.

3. CONFERENCE PRESIDENT AMERASINGHE REITERATED CRITICAL CHARACTER OF PRESENT SESSION AND CAUTIONED THAT NO ONE DELEGATION COULD EXPECT TO OBTAIN ALL IT DESIRE; COMPROMISE WOULD BE KEY WORK OF SESSION. LATER, DURING DISCUSSION OF ORGANIZATION OF NEGOTIATIONS, AMERASINGHE STATED NO GENERAL DISCUSSION WOULD BE HELD ON INFORMAL NEGOTIATING TEXTS; CHAIRMEN OF MAIN COMMITTEES SHOULD PROCEED IMMEDIATELY TO INITIATE NEGOTIATIONS, PROCEDURE FOR WHICH WOULD DEPEND ON NATURE OF COMMITTEE'S MANDATE; AND INFORMAL MEETINGS OF PLENARY WOULD BE HELD TO ENSURE PROPER COORDINATION OF NEGOTIATIONS. HE STRESSED HIS VIEW THAT FORMAL MEETINGS SHOULD, AS FAR AS POSSIBLE, BE AVOIDED; TIMING OF FORMAL MEETINGS WOULD BE LEFT TO COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN, WITH REGARD TO SINGLE NEGOTIATING TEXT, AMERASINGHE SAID OBJECTIONS AND PROPOSALS WOULD BE SUBMITTED AS INFORMAL AMENDMENTS. HE ADDED THAT HE FELT PROPOSAL TO LIMIT PROPOSALS TO AMENDMENTS OF FORM RATHER THAN SUBSTANCE NOT PRACTICAL IN VIEW OF PREVIOUS AGREEMENTS CONCERNING SINGLE NEGOTIATING TEXT. HE SAID THAT AT SOME POINT SINGLE NEGOTIATING TEXT WOULD NEED TO BE GIVEN FORMAL STATUS AND SUGGESTED THAT AT THAT TIME PRESIDENT WOULD PREPARE SINGLE DOCUMENT FOLLOWING CONSULTATIONS WITH COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN. HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT INFORMAL PROCEDURE AND STATUS OF TEXTS SHOULD BE MAINTAINED FOR A CERTAIN PERIOD TO PROMOTE PROPER NEGOTIATIONS. AMERASINGHE WENT ON TO WARN CONFERENCE ABOUT POTENTIAL DANGER OF LIMITED GROUP MEETINGS IMPEDED WORK OF MAIN COMMITTEES AND PROPOSED THAT NO GROUP MEETING SHOULD INTERFERE WITH PROCEEDINGS OF CONFERENCE ITSELF. AMERASINGHE THEN DREW ATTENTION TO ADDITIONAL SINGLE NEGOTIATING TEXT HE HAD PREPARED ON SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES WHICH HE BELIEVED WOULD FACILITATE WORK OF CONFERENCE. AS NO GENERAL DISCUSSION HAD BEEN HELD ON THIS TEXT, HE WOULD SET ASIDE A FEW DAYS FOR GENERAL DEBATE ON THE MATTER. AMERASINGHE CLOSED BY APPEALING TO MEMBERS OF CONFERENCE TO AVOID PROTRACTED PROCEDURAL DEBATES SO THAT SESSION MIGHT END WITH A GLIMMER OF HOPE FOR A TREATY ON LAW OF THE SEA.

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4. MAIN DELEGATIONS TO SPEAK WERE AUSTRALIA, USSR AND CHINA. AUSTRALIAN REP (PEACOCK), WHILE PRAISING PREPARATION OF SINGLE NEGOTIATING TEXT AS BASIS FOR DISCUSSION, POINTED OUT THAT SOME PROPOSALS CONCEALED MAJOR DIVISIONS OF OPINION WHICH MUST BE OVERCOME BEFORE AGREEMENT WOULD BE REACHED. WHILE WELCOMING GROWING ACCEPTANCE OF CONCEPT OF ECONOMIC ZONE, HE RECOGNIZED NUMBER OF IMPORTANT ASPECTS IN WHICH IT REMAINED NECESSARY TO RECONCILE INTERESTS OF COASTAL

STATES, DISTANT WATER FISHING STATES, LANDLOCKED STATES AND ECONOMICALLY LESS DEVELOPED STATES. HE EMPHASIZED THAT AUSTRALIA AND OTHER STATES FELT IT IMPORTANT TO ENSURE FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT FOR SHIPS AND AIRCRAFT WITHIN AND OVER STRAITS, ARCHIPELAGIC WATER AND EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONES, AS WELL AS ON AND OVER HIGH SEAS. ADDITIONALLY AUSTRALIA ALSO HOPED THAT CONVENTION WOULD CONFIRM ACQUIRED RIGHTS OF COASTAL STATES WHICH POSSESSED APPURTENANT CONTINENTAL SHELVES.

5. SOVIET REP (KOZYREV) AFTER GENERAL DISCUSSION OF QUESTION OF SINGLE NEGOTIATING TEXT AND SUBMISSION OF TEXTS AND AMENDMENTS, REITERATED NEED FOR CONFERENCE TO REACH DECISIONS ON ALL FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES SO AS TO PRECLUDE ANY POSSIBILITY OF DISPUTE CONCERNING UTILIZATION OF WORLD'S OCEANS, HIGHLIGHTING IMPORTANCE OF EFFECT OF CONFERENCE ON PEACE IN FUTURE YEARS.

6. CHINESE REP (LAI YA-LI) LIMITED HIMSELF TO VERY GENERAL REMARKS CONCERNING IMPORTANCE OF CONFERENCE, PARTICULARLY TO THIRD WORLD, STRESSING THAT HIS DELEGATION WOULD ADHERE TO ITS POSITION AND WORK FOR POSITIVE RESULTS.

7. CONFERENCE ALSO HEARD GENERAL STATEMENTS FROM THREE COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN (ENGO/CAMEROON, AGUILAR/VENEZUELA, AND YANKOV/BULGARIA). FROM CHAIRMAN OF DRAFTING COMMITTEE (BEESLEY/CANADA) AND FROM RAPPORTEUR GENERAL (RATTRAY/JAMAICA), AS WELL AS FROM UNSYG SPECIAL REP (ZULETA) AND LOS CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY (HALL). IN ADDITION DELEGATION HEADS OF ROMANIA, PERU, CHILE, ECUADOR, SAUDI ARABIA, EGYPT, INDIA, POLAND, AND BOLIVIA ADDRESSED THE OPENING MEETING.

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